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ABSTRACT

Intended to bring positive awareness and professionalism to the field of early care and education, this career directory introduces those who are beginning careers in child care to a diverse mix of job options in the St. Louis, Missouri area. For those already in the profession, the guide provides a look at other opportunities in the field. The guide includes careers in full-day and part-day child care facilities, and as family child care providers. Careers with families, in school-based programs, in the private sector, and in the community are also covered. The guide also examines issues in the field. A resource section containing contact information of programs and services for caregivers, families, children and the community is appended. (JPB)

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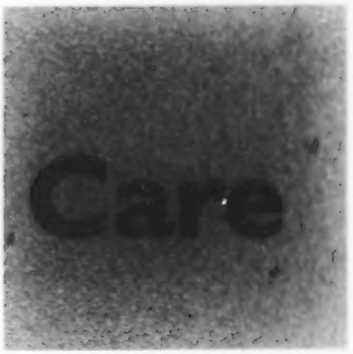
Pathways

in Early Care



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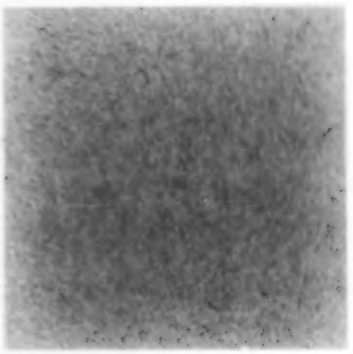

Career Opportunities in the Field

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The Child Day Care Association of St. Louis

Pathways in Early Care and Education: Career Opportunities in the Field

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Foreword

The pathways to success in the field of early care and education are different for each of us and often filled with both bumps in the road and smooth pavement. No matter what the circumstances, our jobs as early childhood professionals are among the most important careers any adult can undertake. Unfortunately these same jobs still do not command the respect and the compensation they deserve.

The struggle to define ourselves as teachers of young children as well as their caregivers continues today. Some see teaching and caring as two separate and defining functions. This narrow perspective, however, is changing as the public recognizes the need for quality child care experiences and also realizes that those experiences begin with, and are enhanced by, those who care for our children.

There is an unprecedented demand for qualified, professionally prepared early childhood educators. Current studies tell us that quality child care is affected by the level of staff education and wages. We also know from recent research on brain development that young children need a variety of rich experiences to develop properly.

In an effort to bring positive awareness and professionalism to the field of early care and education, the St. Louis Regional Child Care Partnership developed ***Pathways in Early Care and Education: Career Opportunities in the Field.***

Pathways is a career directory that introduces those who are beginning careers to a diverse mix of job options. For those already in the profession, it provides a look at other opportunities in the field.

During the final stages of the production of *Pathways*, the St. Louis Regional Child Care Partnership merged with the Child Day Care Association of St. Louis (CDCA). *Pathways* is published under the auspices of CDCA as a special project of the Child Care Partnership.

The Child Care Partnership appreciates the generous support of our funders, the Danforth Foundation and the St. Louis Service Bureau Foundation. We also thank our project consultants, Sarah Kirschner and Corinne Patton, who spent many hours developing and writing *Pathways* and Heather Renkemeyer, CDCA's Special Projects Manager who managed the production of this publication. We also extend our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Advisory Committee whose job it was to oversee the content areas, provide feedback, and generally keep us on the right track. A special thanks to Day Care Services Association of North Carolina. Their publication "Careers in Early Childhood" inspired us to undertake this project

No matter where you are in your career, we hope that you will find *Pathways* to be a useful and interesting guide.

Child Day Care Association
March 1998

Introduction

Then

In 1956 the Social Planning council of St. Louis and St. Louis County completed a study, "Five Years of Progress in St. Louis' Day Care Services". One of the focus areas of the study was the qualifications for day care teachers and it said in part: "...that significant change has been brought about by these years of focus, of expounding on responsibility, of providing educational tools, of bringing in the supervision of better qualified directors, **of helping teachers to do better, of expecting teachers to teach better, of paying teachers better, of assigning teachers to smaller classes, of offering teachers training sessions, of expecting teachers to be teachers."**

And Now

In 1995 a national study, "Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers," determined, as one of its major findings, that: "The quality of child care is primarily related to higher staff-to-child ratios, **staff education, and administrators' prior experience.** In addition, **teachers' wages, their education and specialized training were the most important characteristics that distinguish poor, mediocre, and good-quality centers.**

In the years between 1956 and the present, many things in our lives have changed, but the critical need for high standards of competence in those who care for young children remains as important today as it was then.

The Child Day Care Association and the Child Care Partnership are committed to high quality early care and education. We support professional development through the Caregiver-Teacher Scholarship Program, through our many training and professional development projects, and through the Child Care Partnership's publication, "Hitting the Mark", a guide to core competencies in the field.

After work was completed on "Hitting The Mark", we realized that our profession offers many diverse ways in which one can work with and for young children. What was missing, however, was a way to learn about what the jobs are like and what preparation is necessary before one starts looking. The Child Care Partnership set out to change that and *Pathways* is the result.

Early childhood care and education remains an underrated and undervalued field although the work of caring for our youngest children is of vital importance. The jobs described in this directory are among the hardest and most critical jobs anywhere. We must strengthen our professional image, so the difference that we make in children's lives will be recognized.

Pathways is one step toward emphasizing the importance of training, education, and experience in the field. We hope that it offers the reader a wealth of information whether that reader is just entering the field; thinking of making a change within the field; or has already "seen it all". We want this directory to be a tool to help our colleagues, old and new, prepare for just the right job in early childhood care and education.

Defining Terms and Concepts

In the field of early childhood education a number of terms are used to identify those who provide care for children. Each program will have its own job descriptions but the most commonly used include caregiver-teacher, teacher, practitioner, provider. In this directory we use the terms interchangeably. When a program uses a specific term consistently, we follow that use.

How to Use the Directory

Pathways is designed to be used by anyone seeking information about the field of early childhood care and education. Each chapter can stand alone; if the reader only wants information about school-based programs for example, only that

section need be consulted. However, there is much useful information throughout and we encourage you to explore the many opportunities in the field. Regardless of your needs, we encourage everyone to read the introductory sections especially "Professional Preparation".

Professional Preparation

Competent caregivers are made not born. Their life experiences, formal and informal instruction, and the lessons learned while actually caring for children are what shapes and defines early care and education professionals. Unlike other fields that require prescribed courses taken in a sequence, early child care and education has opportunities for individuals with a variety of backgrounds and preparation. Prior experience working with children is extremely valuable; however, it alone cannot substitute for high quality, focused education and training.

The research in the field abounds with studies that document the link between the quality of early care and education and the impact on children's lives. Research also supports the link between quality programs and the training received by practitioners.

Fortunately the St. Louis community is rich in the assets that enhance a caregiver's skills. There are many ways that early childhood professionals can prepare for and remain current in their field.

Vocational-technical programs: within school systems there are programs that focus on early childhood care and education as a first step to becoming a caregiver.

Child Development Associate (CDA): this is a national credential based on the caregiver's ability to demonstrate proficiency in a set of competencies necessary for the appropriate care of children. College credit that will apply to the educational requirements for this credential can be obtained through community college child care programs. For more information about the CDA credential, see the Resource Section.

Degree programs: two year and four year institutions provide college courses to prepare the student for a career in the field. Programs have many different names such as early childhood education, family and consumer sciences, child and family development, or human environmental sciences. Students may earn a child care certificate; or an associate, bachelor or graduate degree.

In Missouri, a graduate of an early childhood education program at a four year college or university is eligible to receive teacher certification. Certification is time-limited and must be updated periodically with continuing education units. Graduates of colleges and universities outside Missouri need to have their transcripts reviewed and approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in order to obtain Missouri certification.

A teacher certificate in early childhood special education may be required in programs that serve children with special needs.

Credit training: refers to college course work, certificate or degree programs that carry college credit.

Non-credit training: includes workshops, conferences, and other training experiences that are neither offered for credit nor are part of a degree or credential program. Non-credit training is offered by resource and referral agencies, professional organizations and other training agencies. Individual training experiences may be used to meet the clock hour training requirement for those who work in licensed child care programs.

There are also many other training or community organizations that offer special training that may benefit child care providers or the community at large. Hospitals, health and safety organizations, cultural institutions, libraries, school districts, and museums offer classes, workshops and seminars in a variety of disciplines that caregivers may find useful in their work.

Some training experiences may be offered as Continuing Education Units (CEUs) which are accreditation units issued by a national or state organization, professional association, college or state agency. CEUs are issued to recognize the quality and appropriateness of content of a training sequence.

Coordinating Preparation with Job Requirements

Missouri does not yet have a statewide system of professional development for early care and education professionals although the groundwork for planning such a system has been laid and work progresses. Opportunities in a Professional Education Network or OPEN, as it is known, has created the beginning steps of coordinating resources within the state to support such a system.

As the OPEN initiative planning process continues, issues such as pre-service and in-service competencies, career ladders, credentialing of trainers and caregivers, articulated training agreements and compensation will be topics under consideration. The charge to those who work on this project will be to coordinate the fragmented and unorganized pieces that currently exist into a coordinated system that supports competent, well-trained and well-compensated professionals. All who work in the field should take advantage of the opportunity to contribute to the OPEN initiative. See the Resource Section for more information about OPEN.

Jobs, such as those requiring teacher certification, have specific educational requirements; but others have less well-defined requirements. Until Missouri's system is in place, early care and education students must seek and rely upon sound academic advice about coursework and programs of study. It is especially important that students who are planning to transfer from one institution to another determine in advance what credits can be transferred to the receiving institutions and if an articulation agreement is in place.

Articulation is a formal agreement within an institution, or between two institutions that ensures that credit earned in one program will be applied toward the requirements of the next level of a higher education program. If two institutions do not have an articulation agreement, a student's child care or early childhood courses might not be counted toward a higher degree and the student will have to repeat courses at the second institution. In addition there are some workshop courses which may also be taken for college credit or which a college may consider accepting as credit. Consult the workshop coordinator or the college where credit will be applied.

Lifelong Learning

It is also important that caregivers give thought to their professional development after they finish their academic work. Those who work in licensed child care programs are currently required to complete 12 clock hours of annual training. The areas of training that will fulfill the requirement are specified in the licensing rules, but there is not a formal system of approving either the content of training or the competency of trainers.

Some early care and education programs design in-service training plans for their employees, but most practitioners are in charge of planning their own professional development experiences. If one considers education to be a life long process, then a varied menu of training with some focus on the caregiver's special area of interest is important. At the very least caregivers should look for training experiences in each of the content areas specified in the licensing rules.

The Child Care Partnership brochure, "Hitting The Mark," offers a checklist for providers to assess their competencies and determine their need for further training in specific areas. A few years ago CDCA developed a handy guide for caregivers to use in recording training. Each page in the booklet specifies a content area so caregivers can record and assess the variety and depth of their training experiences. As a result of the OPEN initiative, the Missouri Department of Health used CDCA's model as a guide to develop a document. The Department plans to distribute the training record for use on a voluntary basis throughout the state.

CDCA is also sponsoring a pilot project called RESPECT, (a REcognition System for Professionals and Early Care Teachers.) The RESPECT system initiates a self-study process to guide practitioners in continuous professional growth.

The process involves:
- an application
- a professional file or portfolio
- an observation of one's interaction skills
- a review of one's file by a panel of peers
- a formal recognition and presentation of a certificate
- a process for setting professional goals
- an annual review of goals and accomplishments.

Information about the RESPECT system is available from CDCA.

Charting a New Course . . . The Governor's Commission On Early Childhood Care and Education

In 1997 Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan authorized the formation of a Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education. This was the first time a Missouri Governor had focused the attention of a commission on the needs of Missouri's youngest citizens. The Commission was composed of approximately 35 individuals representing a broad range of backgrounds that included state government, philanthropic institutions, early care and education professionals, legislators, clergy and employers. The Commission made recommendations to Governor Carnahan in three major policy areas. These involved improving the standards of care to achieve quality, increasing the capacity of communities to provide early care and education services, and funding and financing a statewide system.

Turning recommendations into law and policy takes action by the Missouri General Assembly and state government agencies, but the opportunity exists for advocates to keep the momentum going and advocate for necessary changes. To learn how to obtain a copy of the report of the Governor's Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education, see the Resource Section.

Emerging Trends

Inclusion: The practice of including children with special needs into "typical" early care and education settings is not a new one, but one that has become increasingly more prevalent since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992.

Professionals in the early care and education field who follow developmentally appropriate practices have been, and continue to care for children with disabilities or developmental delays.

For those interested in teaching children with special needs, there is an early childhood special education certification offered at some colleges in Missouri. See the Resource Section for more information.

Caregiver-Teacher Scholarship Program The Child Care Partnership, under the auspices of Child Day Care Association, continues to offer scholarships to caregivers who work in the field and are pursuing college coursework. See the Resource Section for more information about the scholarship program.

Child Care Field-Based Training Program The St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley began this program in the Spring of 1998. The field-based program allows students to take courses from the Child Care Associate Curriculum at their workplace. Instructors assigned to individual students visit their work sites to observe, assess, advise and provide one-on-one instruction. The program will be expanded to the Meramec and Forest Park campuses in the fall of 1998. See the Resource Section for more information about the field-based training program.

Careers in Full-Day and Part-Day Child Care Facilities

Full and part-day child care facilities include private for-profit and non-profit child care centers; federally funded Head Start programs; facilities run by community organizations such as YMCA's and YWCA's; and programs operated by religious organizations and schools. (See page 10 for information about employment in school based programs).

Programs vary widely depending upon the ages of children served, hours of operation, and where the care takes place. In Missouri, full-day child care facilities that serve 5 or more children must meet state child care licensing requirements. Licensing rules set minimum requirements in areas including the physical facility, personnel, staff child ratios, daily programming, nutrition and record keeping. Religiously affiliated centers and part-day preschool programs are inspected for compliance with fire, safety, and health requirements but are not required to meet other licensing requirements.

What the Job Looks Like

Caregiver-teachers in child care centers must understand and enjoy working directly with young children. They must manage their classroom and provide appropriate structure and activities for the children. They must also organize their time to keep up with many children and their individual needs. These demanding jobs require "hands-on" interaction with children and the ability to bend, lift, sit on the floor, and participate in outdoor activities. Activities include helping the children with playing, feeding, toileting, naps, and other activities. Each age group has different needs and characteristics. Working with infants is distinctly different from working with pre-schoolers or in an after-school program.

A caregiver-teacher may follow a schedule that is already established or may be responsible for planning part or all of the day's activities.

Although most of the work involves interaction with children, staff will also work with parents, the facility director, and other staff. There are part-time and full-time positions which start at entry level as an assistant and proceed through supervisory and administrative positions.

Employment Opportunities

Full and part-day based programs take place in private child care centers, churches and other religious buildings, YMCA's, YWCA's, community centers, schools, and corporate child care facilities. Child care is also provided for the convenience of customers at bowling alleys, fitness centers and casinos, and in specialized programs that care for ill children or offer drop-in care such as "Mom's Day Out" when other care is unavailable.

Summer camps offer a work opportunity which may be especially attractive to students and others with time off during the summer. Currently summer programs are not regulated or inspected and may be operated by schools, child care facilities, camps, religious organizations, museums and cultural institutions, parks and recreation departments and others.

Educational Background

Missouri does not set any minimum educational standards for caregivers who work in licensed facilities. Educational requirements for center directors are tied to the capacity of the center. The larger the center the more hours required in general coursework and in specialized child-related courses. Child care facilities set their own standards for education and experience and actual qualifications of people working in the field range from very minimal to those with a college degrees and a great deal of experience. See the Resource Section under the Missouri Department of Health for more information about licensing requirements.

Salary Ranges

Salaries begin at $5.15 to $6.50 per hour for assistant teachers and part-time staff. Lead teacher salaries range from $6.00 to $11.00 per hour for lead teachers depending on years of education and experience. Directors earn anywhere from $8.00 to $19.00 per hour depending on experience and level of education.

A note on salary ranges: Salaries in child care facilities vary perhaps more than in any other field. There are no standards for salaries just as there are few standards for professional development and preparation. Speaking generally, salaries are lowest in private, for profit facilities and highest in corporate, hospital, public school, or accredited facilities. Like other fields, salaries vary based on education and experience as well as where the job takes place.

Although salaries are often low, some child care facilities are able to provide benefits as part of the total compensation package. Be sure to inquire about these benefits and to include them in making employment decisions.

Special Knowledge and Skills

Caregivers should have a positive attitude, be in good health, be reliable, and should understand and apply developmentally appropriate practices to the children in their classroom. They must treat the children, other staff, and parents with respect. Each age group has different needs and characteristics, experience or training for work with a specific age group can be very helpful. In addition, some facilities serve children with special needs created by a disability or illness. These positions may require special training or experience to help serve these special children.

Beyond the required skills, centers often prefer candidates with formal education or training in developmentally appropriate practice. Knowledge of several curriculum models and the ability to use the best of each, and good communication skills are also valued.

Head Start

Head Start is an early education program that has historically served children ages 3 to 5 years; now some programs are expanding to serve younger children through "Early Head Start". Head Start provides a comprehensive early childhood program and includes extensive coordinated social services and job skill training for parents. Head Start programs are administered by local agencies that receive federal funds and provide their own local match of funding and other in-kind support. Head Start programs are state licensed and some are accredited.

What The Jobs Look Like

The jobs in a Head Start program include lead and assistant teachers at the classroom level, center coordinators who manage facilities, and early childhood specialists who provide the technical assistance and resources for educational services to parents and children. Teachers in Head Start work with the entire family. Other specialized positions include family service worker, disability specialist and those who manage the transition from Head Start to school programs. Employees of Head Start work on a variety of schedules including full and part-day and full and part-year.

Educational Background

Teacher Assistant is the entry level position that requires a minimum of a high school degree or a GED and a combination of approved training, work experience or college coursework. Lead teachers must have a CDA credential or a two year or four year degree with early childhood specialization. Center coordinators and early childhood specialists must have education and work experience to prepare them for management responsibilities.

There is also a program open to the community to recruit and train substitute teachers and prepare them for the classroom.

Salary Ranges

Full time entry level positions start at $6 per hour and include a benefits package. Lead teachers earn $8 to $12 per hour. Salaries for specialists and coordinators vary with the positions.

Emerging Trend:

A Credential For Directors of Early Care and Education Programs

Directing an early care and education program, large or small, requires an individual to possess a unique set of competencies. A director's credential would be a certificate agreed to and accepted by state agencies and others who set standards for service. A directors' credential could be used as a point of reference in setting requirements for employment and in determining salaries.

Locally CDCA's RESPECT system is including a specific recognition level for directors. Nationally Wheelock College in Boston is literally "Taking The Lead" by developing activities that will result in a nationally recognized credential for those who direct early childhood programs. In addition each summer Wheelock offers a series of advanced seminars on topics related to management and leadership. See the Resource Section for more information about CDCA's RESPECT system and about Wheelock College.

Family Child Care Providers

What the Job Looks Like

A family child care provider is a small business owner who provides child care in his or her home for a small number of children. As the sole employee, the provider has a great deal of control over the program and activities of the children in his or her care. Some providers create a separate space within the home for child care while others use the family living area. The provider may spend 10-12 hours a day alone with the children and must be able to handle the isolation of this type of work.

The family child care provider may also need experience or access to information on being self-employed. The business of family child care includes record keeping; paying and filing tax reports; securing insurance; and, if a provider hires an assistant, managing an employee.

Employment Opportunities

Opportunities vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and subdivisions, municipalities, and counties may have zoning requirements which regulate, restrict or even prohibit this type of home business.

Market research is recommended before starting this business. Is it allowed in the neighborhood? What are local regulations? What is the need in the community or neighborhood? What can area parents afford to pay for care? What kind of care is in high demand? Will an assistant be necessary?

CDCA offers technical assistance to those individuals who are considering becoming a family care provider.

Educational Background

Twelve clock hours of annual training is the only education requirement in Missouri for a licensed child care provider. In actual settings, some providers have very little education or experience while others have advanced degrees. Most local conferences offer sessions specifically designed for family child care providers. Other helpful courses or training might include:

- Child Development
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Health, First Aid, CPR
- Nutrition
- Courses on small business practice

Salary Ranges

In St. Louis in 1997, fees for family child care were running from approximately $65 per week all the way up to $175 per week for children under age two and from $55 to $150 per week for children over age two. Fees vary greatly depending upon geographic location, program offered, and what families can afford to pay. The income of the family child care provider will depend in large part on the fees charged and expenses of running a business.

State Licensing Requirements

Family child care providers who care for more than four children must meet the licensing requirements set by the state of Missouri. Rules and regulations change periodically; for information on child care licensing contact the Department of Health, Bureau of Child Care Safety and Licensure. See the Resource Section.

Specializations

Because the provider is running his or her own business, they may choose to offer only special types of care and to seek additional training for a speciality such as infant care, care for mildly ill children, night or weekend care, or care for disabled or children with special needs.

Special Skills

- Knowledge of child development, developmentally appropriate activities, nutrition, child health and safety
- Ability to work alone in a demanding environment
- Ability to maintain a safe and suitable home and outdoor play area
- Knowledge of small business practices such as budgeting and bookkeeping

Emerging Trend:

As more and more families need night time and weekend care, the family child care home is a logical place to offer this type of specialized care. Nationally, some employers have been willing to help support networks of family child care providers in order to provide care of the kind needed by their employees.

Careers in School-Based Programs

Schools in the St. Louis area provide a variety of programs for children birth to age eight or older and many private schools also offer before and after school programs. There are full-day child care facilities; before and after school programs; enrichment programs; full or half-day preschools; traditional kindergarten, first, second, and third grade programs; and lab schools operated by colleges and universities that provide teacher training as well as early childhood services for children. Programs are differentiated by their hours of operation, type of program, and ages of child served.

In Missouri, programs operated by a public or private school system are exempt from state child care licensing requirements. Private schools in Missouri also are not subject to regulation by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Specific information about educational requirements, job opportunities and salary ranges in a private school is best obtained directly from the school.

In public schools, job titles vary from district to district but in all school-based early childhood programs there are several levels of workers from the entry level assistant through the lead teacher. Working outside the classroom are directors of individual programs and directors of programs district-wide. Most school districts offer programs for preschool children with special needs.

What the Job Looks Like

School-based early childhood programs must provide a safe and caring environment where children can explore, learn and discover their world and provide a base for their elementary education. Teachers must be able to participate in children's activities such as outdoor play and be able to handle the physical demands of bending, lifting, and sitting on the floor. While their primary interaction is with children, they also need to be able to interact with parents and other staff members. The lead teachers and directors develop programs, implement policies, work with parents, and supervise other staff. Assistants help carry out these programs and policies. At the director and administrator levels the responsibilities become more managerial and move out of the classroom and into dealing with budgeting, personnel, and administrative functions.

Classroom teachers in kindergarten through third grade follow a specific curriculum adopted by the district. A specific curriculum may range from very traditional to experimental. A teacher should explore a school's educational philosophy and observe the classroom environment when applying for a position.

Employment Opportunities

The school setting may be in a public school district or in a private school. All public school districts in the St. Louis metropolitan area offer, at minimum, a Parents As Teachers program and some offer more extensive full and part-day child care programs.

Educational Background

Public school districts that operate preschool programs with funding from DESE must adhere to state requirements regarding teacher certification and salary schedules. School districts that use only local funding for their preschools may set their own standards for educational requirements and salaries. In either case an assistant position generally requires a high school diploma, some college credit preferred, and 1-3 years of experience caring for children. As responsibilities increase, more education is required. Lead teachers are usually expected to have a college degree in early childhood education, 1-3 years experience working with children, the ability to develop activities for their classroom, and the ability to supervise one or more classroom assistants. Directors of programs and administrators have extensive experience in the classroom as well as advanced education.

Classroom teachers in Kindergarten through third grade must have a four year degree and a current Missouri teacher certificate.

Salary Ranges

Salaries for assistants in preschool programs range from $6 to $8 an hour. Lead teachers and supervisors can earn $16,000 to $28,000 per year.

In the St. Louis metropolitan area, classroom teachers in kindergarten through grade three can earn $23,000 to $27,000.

Teacher Certification

In Missouri, teacher certification is granted to students who have completed the required course of study in early childhood education and graduated from a four year college or university. Certification is time-limited and must be updated periodically with continuing education units. Graduates of colleges and universities outside of Missouri need to have their transcripts reviewed and approved by DESE in order to obtain Missouri certification.

A certificate in early childhood special education may be required in programs that serve children with special needs.

Related Opportunities

Educare is an early education program initiated by Missouri as part of the state welfare program. Educare links parents, community child care providers and schools with the goal of preparing children to enter school ready to learn. See the Resource Section for more information.

Caring Communities is a school-based, family- and neighborhood-focused delivery system of services to families within designated neighborhoods. Caring Communities integrates school and home-based services and offers prevention and intervention activities including after school child care programs, tutoring and respite services. See the Resource Section for more information.

Careers Working With Families

For practitioners who prefer to work directly with families there are several areas of potential employment. Some jobs such as parent educator and family support worker involve as much or more contact with adults as children. Positions such as a nanny, both permanent and temporary; a doula, who helps care for newborns; or a respite care worker involve the direct care of children as well as interaction with adults.

Parent Educators

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) program, which is now in many states around the country, began in Missouri in 1985. Parent educators work directly with parents and children in their homes to help parents learn about child development, encourage their child's learning, and help build the parent-child relationship. The parent educator answers parents' questions and conducts developmental screenings with the children. The parent educator should be comfortable working with people, especially small children, and facilitating parent meetings.

What the Job Looks Like

This job involves home visits to families in the school district and facilitating events at a school site. Some child care centers also have PAT programs in which center staff are trained as parent educators and work with the families who attend their center.

Educational Background

After being hired by a PAT program, parent educators in Missouri are certified through the Parents as Teachers Institute. In addition to this certification, the parent educator must also meet ongoing certification and in-service training requirements. The minimum experience level is 5 years of supervised experience in an early childhood program. A degree in early childhood education or a related field is preferred.

Salary Range

The parent educator is employed by a school district or a child care center. Each district sets their own standards for hiring, salary, and job requirements. Positions generally pay $10 per hour and up. There are opportunities for supervisory, training, and administrative positions. For more information contact the Parents as Teachers program in each school district.

Nannies

What the Job Looks Like

A nanny is someone who works in a family's home providing child care and perhaps some housekeeping duties. The nanny may live with the family or in her own home. A nanny position may be found through a placement agency, a school or training program, an ad in the newspaper, or word of mouth.

Educational Background

There are no education requirements, licenses, or certificates currently required by the state of

Missouri. Nanny placement agencies may require a high school diploma or G.E.D. and often prefer some college courses in child development, CPR and first aid training. There are a few nanny training programs in the United States; some nanny placement agencies may provide training opportunities. Nannies may need special training to care for children with special needs.

The nanny should have a solid understanding of child development, and appropriate activities for children at different ages. They may also need to know the basics of nutrition, pet care, home management, and may even provide transportation for children to and from school and activities.

Salary Range

Salary depends on the nanny's experience, education, duties and hours, and the financial situation of the employer-family. Average salaries in the St. Louis area are $200 to $400 per week.

For a listing of local nanny placement agencies refer to the telephone yellow pages

Emerging Trend:

Nannies are in great demand in our community. A training program in which college credit is directed toward a Professional Nanny Certificate will be available soon through the St. Louis Community College System.

Temporary Nannies

A temporary nanny works on an as needed basis. Temporary care often is needed by families when their regular child care arrangements fall through. Families use temporary caregivers for emergency child care, care of ill children, snow days, school holidays and closings, and overnight care. A temporary nanny may work 15 hours one week and 40 hours the next depending on his/her availability or desire to work.

This type of work may meet the needs of students who want to earn the money of a permanent position, but need the flexibility to take time off for exams or school breaks. A temporary nanny has the flexibility to work as much or as little as he/she chooses without penalty. The average salary range is $5.25 to $10.00 an hour.

Temporary nannies may find positions through nanny placement agencies, ads in local newspapers or through informal networks such as neighborhood organizations, churches or synagogues. Temporary nannies working with an agency may also be sent to work as substitutes in child care facilities when employees are absent.

Related Fields:

Doulas/Post-partum Care

With families scattered across the country and short hospital stays for new mothers, the ancient tradition of the "doula" is re-emerging. A doula is a person who helps parents learn baby care skills by teaching the basics of breast feeding, bathing, colic, and other parenting questions. The doula does not offer medical advice but helps parents adjust, learn, and get some rest in the early months after their baby is born. The doula may also do light housekeeping, run errands, or attend to siblings during this transition. There are currently no industry standards of training in this field nor a fixed salary range although salaries begin at about $10.00 an hour.

The doula must have experience working with infants and may become a doula through other jobs such as nursing, teaching or homemaking. The doula must be empathetic, caring and able to juggle a variety of tasks while remaining calm and supportive. She may be particularly helpful to a mother suffering from postpartum depression.

For more information about Doulas refer to the Resource Section.

Others who provide post-partum care include visiting nurses and other home-health agencies.

Respite Care Workers

Respite care is a service that provides families of children with disabilities with some temporary "time off" from the challenges of caring for a child with a disability. Respite care can be offered in the family's home for daytime, evening or overnight for varying lengths of time. Respite care can also be offered in the provider's home, a residential center or as part of specialized care in a child care center.

Family Support Workers

Family support workers help families access the resources they need to care for their children. They provide information about a wide range of issues that can help families experiencing difficulty. Family support workers need to be knowledgeable of child and family development as well as community resources. They also must have the ability to communicate information to parents and to encourage families to take advantage of services. Family support workers may be employed by Head Start agencies, family resource centers, social service agencies, and community mental health agencies.

After September 1999, individuals with an early childhood teaching certificate can take additional coursework toward a Family Resource Specialist certification which will be geared to professionals working with families. Contact the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for details. See the Resource Section.

Careers in the Public Sector

Government agencies are involved in early care and education at the federal, state and, in some cases, local levels. This section focuses on the state agencies that are responsible for administering programs that deal with child health, the regulation of child care facilities, school-based early childhood education programs, child mental health and child protection services.

The jobs at the agencies and programs described below require college coursework and most require at least a Bachelor's degree. Besides the academic requirements, work in the public sector requires that employees have very good communication skills and a willingness to serve the public interest. State agencies are large and complex places to work, but the jobs provide a broad range of experiences and contacts not found in smaller private sector jobs.

Each government or administering agency will have specific requirements for skills and education depending upon their function. The programs described below may involve direct or indirect work with young children, but each has a component in which early care and education training would be useful. Salary ranges will also be determined by the department and function. For more information on careers in the public sector, contact the personnel office at the local offices of state agencies or at the central office of each agency located in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Department of Health

The Department of Health (DOH) serves young children in Missouri in several ways by overseeing the following: immunization; screening newborns for metabolic diseases; lead screening; communicable disease investigation; and education programs for parents, schools, and child care providers.

In addition DOH, through the Bureau of Child Care Safety and Licensure, regulates licensed and license-exempt child care facilities in the state. Child Care Facility Specialists who work in the Bureau inspect child care programs to determine if they comply with state rules and offer consultation to those starting new programs.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) oversees a variety of early childhood programs in the state. Contact local school districts for specific information about the programs listed below:

Parents As Teachers: An early childhood parent education program offered through local school districts. (See description on page 12).

First Steps: A system of coordinated, resource-based early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families. It is a voluntary system with the intent of assisting families in understanding and meeting the special needs of their children with disabilities.

Even Start: A family literacy program which tries to break the cycle of poverty through an integrated program of early childhood education, adult literacy or education, and parenting education. The program serves parents and children birth through age seven.

Title I programs: A federally funded preschool program designed to meet the needs of children who are not performing at age level. Multiple criteria is utilized to select children for the program. Teachers must hold an Early Childhood Teaching certificate. Title I programs must follow certain guidelines such as maximum class size.

Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) provides services to young children with disabilities and behavioral and emotional problems in the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services.

DMH also licenses day treatment facilities for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

Department of Social Services Division of Family Services

There are a number of positions in the Division of Family Services (DFS) that involve work with or on behalf of young children. DFS staff license foster care homes and residential treatment facilities and help families who are eligible for the state's subsidized child care program. DFS child protection staff provide casework and case management services to families in crisis who need help so they can stay together or so they can be reunited with children who were removed because of abuse and neglect.

Careers in the Community

In addition to programs that provide direct interaction with children, the early care and education path connects to other child-related jobs in the community. Included below are examples of opportunities in which a person's professional early childhood preparation would offer an advantage in seeking employment. The kinds of jobs described in this chapter might provide a new route to consider for those already working in the field.

Instructors and Trainers

Within the St. Louis community there are many organizations and institutions which provide training or instruction in early childhood practice. Instructors and trainers who work in these organizations quite often have an extensive background in early childhood through their education and experience.

There are several areas in which instructors and trainers of early childhood caregivers may find employment. Two year and four year colleges and universities employ professors and instructors in their programs. Trainers may also work for child care resource and referral agencies that offer training opportunities through their education departments. Vocational-technical training programs in school districts employ teachers as do special training programs such as Project Construct.

To be a trainer in Missouri there are currently no certification standards of any kind. Organizations that provide legitimate training programs for child care providers have established minimum standards for their instructors.

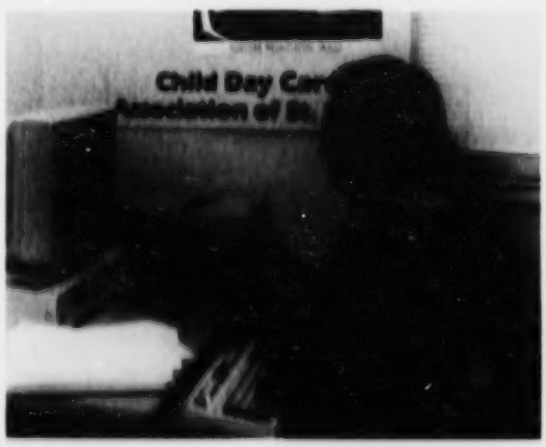
For information on career opportunities as a trainer, instructor, or professor of early childhood education contact the educational institution or training organization for details on those jobs.

Other Opportunities

There are many organizations in the community which work with children and their families. United Way, child care resource and referral agencies, community resource centers and others may find early childhood education and experience valuable to their programs.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies: while total employment opportunities may be small, most of the people employed by child care resource and referral agencies come from an early childhood education background. Resource and referral agencies help parents find child care, train caregiver-teachers, advocate for child care issues in the community, and work with employers on a variety of work/family issues.

Child Care Food Program: the purpose of the child care food program is to promote good nutrition for children in child care. In Missouri this program is administered by the Department



of Health. Local sponsoring organizations, such as CDCA, visit family child care providers to monitor nutrition requirements and to promote child health through nutrition education. See the Resource Section for more information.

Residential Treatment Facilities: child care workers at these programs care for children who live at the facility and who receive intensive treatment services because of physical, mental or behavioral problems. Children range in age from infants through adolescents.

Jobs in Other Fields: early childhood professionals also find work in areas off the usual career path designing children's clothing or toys, consulting or writing, marketing for toy companies or as a small business owner.

Be an Advocate

There are so many issues that affect the field of early childhood care and education; licensing of facilities; compensation of caregivers; training of caregivers; health and safety issues for the children in care; welfare reform. There are almost limitless opportunities to help others understand the impact of policies on our children by being an advocate for change. Do this by participating in a professional organization; by speaking in public on an early childhood topic; by informing parents of policies that will impact their children; by writing and speaking to elected officials. Early childhood educators are an important voice for our children.

Taking Another Track . . . Volunteer Opportunities

In the field of early childhood care and education there are so many unmet needs and many organizations struggling to try to meet those needs. Volunteer organizations are an excellent place to use existing skills or to try new ones. From a hands-on experience working directly with children such as reading, mentoring or helping in a classroom to indirect experience like fundraising, helping in an office, or advocating for better public policy, there are hundreds of opportunities for all kinds of volunteers. For those still in school or considering the field, volunteering may offer the chance to try some of the jobs in the field. For others, a little free time spent being an advocate or friend for a child can be a wonderful, enriching experience.

A Look at Issues in the Field...

After years of obscurity, early childhood care and education is a hot topic. Recently published brain research and intense attention by political leaders and the media have focused attention on the importance of early care. As we look forward many issues will continue to impact our field.

Quality

Each day millions of children and their parents trust a child care provider. In addition to adequate funding and appropriate regulation, a provider is the key to quality child care.

Compensation remains a critical issue for those who work with children in this country. Child care providers are among the lowest paid workers and yet do a job that is more important than almost any other. Caregiver's wages must be sufficient to provide a decent standard of living and must be linked to their educational achievements. Efforts continue by advocates and professional organizations to educate the public about the importance of high quality, well-trained, well compensated caregivers in our early childhood programs.

For all its importance, there is still a lack of public support for quality programming in early care and education. The cost of funding quality programs, lack of understanding by parents of what makes a quality program, and the inability of parents to pay more for care are all reasons for this lack of support. State licensing standards also contribute to a lack of quality in programs. Research shows that well educated caregivers and low staff to child ratios are among the best ways to achieve quality. In a national comparison, Missouri's staff to child ratio requirements compare favorably to states in the middle of the ranking. Unfortunately, the lack of educational requirements for caregivers pushes our state to a low ranking on the quality scale.

Finding ways to improve the quality of care, especially during a time of increased demand, will be a critical issue for child care professionals in the coming years.

The Workplace

Since the 1960's huge numbers of women have re-entered the workforce creating a new demand for child care and other work/family assistance. Relocations, downsizing, and round-the-clock operations have created additional demands on families as they lose their support network or seek child care during evenings, nights, and weekends. All types of care are likely to continue to expand in order to accommodate the needs of working parents while workplace demands will continue to stress families, children, and our child care system.

We can only guess at the changes that welfare reform will bring but experts expect that large numbers of children who were not in child care will now need care on a full-time, part-time or occasional basis.

Public Policy

The child care system is unfunded. While some states contribute significant state dollars to child care, at the present time Missouri's contribution is minimal. Most funding comes from the federal government in the form of subsidies to low income families and from parent fees that can not cover the cost of high quality care. There are initiatives on the national and local levels that attempt to create community partnerships involving families, community groups, and employers in trying to solve child care issues. Employer involvement in work/family issues is expected to continue to grow as the labor market tightens and employers recognize the costs of not addressing work/family conflict.

Another issue which continues to confront the field is the separation of **child care** from **education.** While there are early childhood programs within school systems, a far greater number of children are cared for in child care settings. In the past, these two systems have not communicated readily or easily with one another. To meet the future needs of young children, all

those who interact with children must recognize that care, nurturing and education are inescapably linked. When we understand the linkages between providers and schools and appreciate the role of each in helping children make a successful transition, we will close the gap and provide the service that children and their families deserve.

One of our many challenges is to find ways to offer children the best care possible in all the places in which they live, grow, and learn. For those who have chosen early childhood education as a profession there are many challenges ahead. This is not an easy pathway but impacting the life of a child is a reward worth the effort.

Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning how to learn.

Loris Malaguzzi

The Resource Section

This section provides information for early childhood professionals on topics discussed in *Pathways*. The list is not a comprehensive review of all programs and services for caregivers, families, children and the community. Any omission is unintentional.

Caring for Kids:
For information about training for child care providers contact:
St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley
3400 Pershall Rd., St. Louis, MO 63135
314-595-4391

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline
To report child abuse/neglect call:
1-800-392-3738

Child Care Field-Based Certificate Program
For information about the program contact:
St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley
3400 Pershall Road, St. Louis, MO 63135
314-595-2322

Child Day Care Association:
For information on services for families, providers, employers and the community contact:
2031 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO 63103
314-241-3161

- Caregiver-Teacher Scholarship Program
- Child Care Food Program
- Child Care Partnership
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice Classes
- Employer Services
- Grow and Learn Workshop Series
- Publications
- Resource and Referral
- RESPECT (REcognition System for Professionals and Early Care Teachers)

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA):
For information about this credential contact:
National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
1-800-424-4310

Doula
For information contact:
National Association of Post Partum Care
1-800-45DOULA

Educare
A school-based early childhood program that links family child care providers and child care centers with schools. For information on the local sites contact:
Columbia Community Education Center
St. Louis Public Schools
3120 St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63106
314-652-1659

Family Resource Center
Ritenour School District
3344 Ashby, St. Ann, MO 63074
314-426-9564

Family Resource Center
School District of University City
1500 N. 82nd Street, St. Louis, MO 63130
314-993-8327

Family Support Council
An agency that serves as a resource to assist and encourage organizations and efforts within the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County to build support systems for families. For more information contact:
United Way of Greater St. Louis
1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO 63101
314-539-4047

Governor's Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education
To obtain a copy of the report contact:
Family Investment Trust
3915 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
314-531-5505

Human Development Corporation of Metropolitan St. Louis
For information on the Head Start Program for the City of St. Louis contact:
929 N. Spring Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63108
314-652-5100

Missouri Center for Accreditation
For information on obtaining an application for Missouri accreditation contact:
Stephens College
Campus Box 2022, Columbia, MO 65215
573-876-2321

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
For information on job opportunities contact:
P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-751-4212

For information on Teacher Certification, review of out-of-state transcripts, and Family Resource Specialist certification, call: 573-526-3578

Missouri Department of Health
For information on job opportunities, licensing and to obtain a copy of the licensing rules, contact:
Bureau of Child Care Safety and Licensure
St. Louis Office
220 S. Jefferson, St. Louis, MO 63103
314-877-0210
or Post Office Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-751-2450

For information on the Child Care Food Program, contact:
Bureau of Nutrition and Child Care Programs
Post Office Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102
1-800-733-6251

Missouri Department of Higher Education
For information on the colleges in Missouri offering Early Childhood Special Education degree programs call:
Coordinating Board for Higher Education,
573-751-2361

Missouri Division of Family Services
For information on services and job opportunities contact:
St. Louis City
3545 Lindell, St. Louis, MO 63103
314-340-5000

St. Louis County
9900 Page, St. Louis, MO 63132
314-426-9600

St. Charles County
3737 Harry S Truman Blvd.,
St. Charles, MO 63301
314-946-7200

Opportunities in a Professional Education Network (OPEN)
An initiative creating a statewide professional development system. For information contact:
HDFS Extension, University of Missouri-Columbia
162 B Stanley Hall, Columbia, MO 65211
573-882-4628

Parents as Teachers Program
For information on Parents as Teachers programs in schools contact your local school district.

Parents as Teachers National Center
For information on bringing PAT services to child care centers contact:
10176 Corporate Square, St. Louis, MO 63132
314-432-4330

St. Louis Association for the Education of Young Children
A professional organization for early care and education practitioners. For information contact:
St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley
Child Development Center
3400 Pershall Road, St. Louis, MO 63135
314-595-4593

St. Louis Caring Communities
For information about local schools offering the program contact:
4411 N. Newstead, St. Louis, MO 63115
314-877-2050

Success by Six
A community-wide effort to increase families' access to programs, services and information so that all children by age six have the skills necessary for success in school. For more information contact:
United Way of Greater St. Louis
1111 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO 63101
314-539-4064

TLC Nanny & Child Care Service
For information about nanny placement contact:
7301 Tulane, St. Louis, MO 63130
314-725-5660

Wheelock College
For information about the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education and the Advanced Summer Seminars contact:
200 The Riverway, Boston, MA 02215
617-734-5200 ext. 211

YWCA Head Start/Administrative Office
For information about the Head Start Program for St. Louis County contact:
1911 Beltway, St. Louis, MO 63114
314-427-4940

AREA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Fontbonne College
6800 Wydown, St. Louis, MO 63105
314-889-1400

Harris Stowe State College
3026 Laclede, St. Louis, MO 63103
314-341-3366

Lindenwood College
209 S. Kingshighway, St. Charles, MO
314-949-2000

Maryville University
13550 Conway Road, St. Louis, MO 63141
314-529-9300

Missouri Baptist College
1 College Park Drive, St. Louis, MO 63141
314-434-1115

St. Louis University
211 N. Grand, St. Louis, MO 63103
314-977-2330

University of Missouri-St. Louis
8001 Natural Bridge, St. Louis, MO 63121
314-516-5000

Washington University
One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130
314-935-5000

Webster University
470 E. Lockwood, St. Louis, MO 63119
314-968-6991

AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

East Central Community College
Post Office Box 529, Union, MO 63084
314-583-5193

St. Charles County Community College
4601 Mid Rivers Mall Drive
Post Office Box 76975, St. Peters, MO 63376
314-922-8000

Jefferson County Community College
1000 Viking Drive, Hillsboro, MO 63050
314-789-3951

St. Louis Community Colleges
Florissant Valley
3400 Pershall Road, St. Louis, MO 63135
314-595-4200

Forest Park
5600 Oakland Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110
314-644-9100

Meramec
11333 Big Bend Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63122
314-984-7500

cdca

The Child Day Care Association of St. Louis
2031 Olive Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63103
314-241-3161

United Way Member

An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer services provided on a non-discriminatory basis.